Consultation on a Proposal to allocate Service Requests to a Priority Band in Southbound Prioritisation (SECMP0028)

Date: 14 August 2024

Respond by: 5 September 2024

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Table of Contents

[1. Introduction and Context 3](#_Toc174356952)

[1.1. Background 3](#_Toc174356953)

[1.2. Purpose of the consultation 3](#_Toc174356954)

[2. Proposed Changes and Options 4](#_Toc174356955)

[3. Next Steps 4](#_Toc174356956)

[4. How to Respond 4](#_Toc174356957)

# Introduction and Context

1. The Data Communications Company (DCC) is Britain’s digital energy spine, supporting the transformation of the energy system. DCC is licensed by the Government and regulated by the energy regulator Ofgem to connect smart meters in homes and small businesses across Great Britain to a single secure, digital network. DCC supports the roll-out of second-generation (SMETS2) smart meters, as well as the migration of existing first-generation (SMETS1) meters onto our network.

## Background

1. SECMP0028[[1]](#footnote-2), to be implemented on 7 November 2024 as part of the November 2024 Smart Energy Code (SEC) Release, introduces a mechanism for the prioritisation of traffic Southbound from the Data Service Provider (DSP), thus accelerating the passage of a business process that requires processing within seconds, such as Prepayment commands.
2. When a DCC User submits a new Service Reference Variant (SRV) to the DCC (Southbound traffic), the SRV will enter a ‘motorway’ which will act as a queue for requests. Whilst in this queue, all On Demand SRVs will be processed ahead of Scheduled SRVs, and specific prioritised SRVs will be assigned to a priority Level for processing in a particular order. SRVs in Priority Band 1 will be processed ahead of other On Demand SRVs.
3. Southbound messages will be prioritised for onward transmission to both SMETS2 and SMETS1 Communications Service Providers (CSPs) through the CSP Wide Area Network (WAN) and SMETS1 Service Provider (S1SP) Gateways respectively. This will also include the Communications Hubs and Networks 4G Service Provider.
4. The Traffic Management Mechanism Document, first introduced by SECMP0062, will show the configurable priority levels assigned to Southbound messages. These priority levels could then be altered by a consultation, approval from SEC Panel, and a simple re-configuration not requiring a system outage.
5. After a series of workshops with SEC Parties, and presentations at the Technical Architecture and Business Architecture Sub-Committee (TABASC), and approval from those attending, DCC intends to implement as part of the SECMP0028 implementation in November 2024:

* SRV2.2 in Priority Band 1
* Mode of Operation Priority Levels such that all On Demand SRVs will be processed ahead of Scheduled SRVs

## Purpose of the consultation

1. DCC wishes to understand if the setting of SRV2.2 in Priority Band 1 would negatively impact any SEC Parties.
2. This consultation is expected to impact the following Parties:

* Large Suppliers
* Small Suppliers
* Electricity Network Operators
* Prepayment Customers

1. If you believe a Party category is impacted which isn’t listed above, please let us know.

# Proposed Changes and Options

1. This question relates to the setting of SRV2.2 in Priority Band 1.

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| **Q1** | Should the setting of SRV2.2 in Priority Band 1 be approved, meaning this SRV will be prioritised ahead of other On Demand SRVs? Please provide a rationale for your views. |

# Next Steps

1. Following the closure of this consultation, DCC will consider the responses from SEC Parties in regard to the Priority Band 1 setting in SECMP0028.
2. If there is a majority of Parties agreeing to the change, DCC will implement the configuration to match the wishes of Parties. This would take place in a subsequent Maintenance Release.
3. DCC will confirm the outcome at SEC Panel and the Operations Group meeting at the beginning of October 2024.

# How to Respond

1. Please provide responses by 17:00 on 5 September to DCC at [consultations@smartdcc.co.uk](mailto:consultations@smartdcc.co.uk).
2. Consultation responses may be published on our website [www.smartdcc.co.uk](http://www.smartdcc.co.uk). Please state clearly in writing whether you want all or any part, of your consultation to be treated as confidential. It would be helpful if you could explain to us why you regard the information you have provided as confidential. Please note that responses in their entirety (including any text marked confidential) may be made available to the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (The Department) and the Gas and Electricity Markets Authority (the Authority). Information provided to The Department or the Authority, including personal information, may be subject to publication or disclosure in accordance with the access to information legislation (primarily the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Data Protection Act 2018 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004). If The Department or the Authority receive a request for disclosure of the information we/they will take full account of your explanation (to the extent provided to them), but we/they cannot give an assurance that confidentiality can be maintained in all circumstances. An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not, of itself, be regarded by us as a confidentiality request.
3. If you have any questions about the consultation documents, please contact DCC via [consultations@smartdcc.co.uk](mailto:consultations@smartdcc.co.uk).

1. [Prioritising System Messages - Smart Energy Code (smartenergycodecompany.co.uk)](https://smartenergycodecompany.co.uk/modifications/prioritising-system-messages/)/ [↑](#footnote-ref-2)